

Remarks


The Examiner identified two distinct inventions represented by Group I claims drawn to a personalized directory assistance service, and Group II claims drawn to an automatic call distributor (ACD), respectively. The Examiner asserted that the identified inventions "are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept." Such an assertion by the Examiner is incorrect. In fact, the ACD concept is integral to the personalized directory assistance service concept, and the present application discloses at least one illustrative embodiment of the invention in which the allegedly different inventions are implemented in the same system in an integrated fashion.

However, as required by the Examiner, applicants hereby elect, with traverse, the invention represented by Group I claims 52, 57-75 and 77-85 to be examined. Claim 76 has been canceled. (Although the Examiner included claim 86 in Group I, applicants believe claim 86 which is an independent claim belongs to Group II, instead. In addition, the Examiner erroneously included claim 94 in Group II which was not pending.) Claims 52, 57-63, 65-68, 70-75, 77, 78 and 80-85 have been amended to improve their form. Accordingly, a Version with Markings to Show Changes Made to these claims is enclosed. Applicants have added claims 94-106 which are drawn to different aspects of the elected invention. It is respectfully requested that these claims be examined along with the Group I claims.

Applicants have canceled non-elected Group II claims 86-93 and hereby reserve all rights to re-prosecute these canceled claims in the future.

Respectfully,

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Enclosure

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

52. (Twice Amended) A method of providing [personalized] a directory assistance service [at a directory assistance center], comprising:

maintaining a [first] database [of] including customer identifiers, a customer identifier being associated with a language identifier [identifying] representing a language [spoken] preferred by a customer identified by the customer identifier;

[maintaining a second database of destination telephone numbers;]

receiving a call from a calling customer [using a customer telephone];

[identifying] obtaining a customer identifier associated with the [customer] call;

[retrieving] determining a language identifier associated with the obtained customer identifier [from the first database];

connecting the [customer] call to a directory assistance provider [operator who is] capable of communicating in [the] a language represented by the determined language identifier;

[soliciting] eliciting a request for information from the calling customer in the language represented by the determined language identifier [to enable the operator to search the second database for a destination telephone number of a destination telephone desired by the customer];

[searching the second database;] and

[initiating a telephonic connection between the customer telephone and the destination telephone] providing a directory assistance service in response to the request.

57. (Amended) The method of claim 52, wherein the customer identifier associated with the [customer] call comprises a telephone number.

58. (Amended) The method of claim 57, wherein the [customer] telephone number comprises [the customer's] an ANI.

59. (Amended) The method of claim 57, wherein the customer identifiers in the [first] database comprise telephone numbers.

60. (Amended) The method of claim 52, wherein the [first database and second database comprise the same database] directory assistance service includes searching for a destination telephone number desired by the calling customer.

61. (Amended) The method of claim 52, wherein the directory assistance provider [first database] comprises [a subset of the second database] an operator.

62. (Amended) The method of claim 52, further comprising [the step of] obtaining [the] language [identifier] identifiers from a telephone [services] service provider associated with [the customer] customers.

63. (Amended) The method of claim 52, further comprising [the step of] associating a customer identifier in the [first] database with a priority code.

65. (Amended) The method of claim 64, further comprising [the step of inserting] placing a call from a customer having a customer identifier associated with a first priority code [into] in a queue ahead of a call from a customer having a customer identifier associated with a second priority code.

66. (Amended) The method of claim 64, further comprising [steps of inserting] placing a call from a first customer having a customer identifier associated with a first

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priority code [into] in a first call queue and [inserting] placing a call from a second customer having a customer identifier associated with a second priority code [into] in a second call queue.

67. (Amended) The method of claim 52, further comprising [the step of] providing a greeting personalized to a customer having a customer identifier [number].

68. (Amended) The method of claim 52, further comprising [the step of] providing a closing personalized to a customer having a customer identifier.

70. (Amended) The method of claim 52, further comprising [the step of] identifying a [default] set of directory assistance options based on a [from the] customer identifier.

71. (Amended) A [directory assistance] system for providing [personalized] directory assistance services [to a customer caller], comprising:

[a plurality of inbound channels for receiving calls from customers having associated customer identifiers;

a plurality of outbound channels for attempting to establish connections to destination telephones;]

a switch for receiving [calls and customer identifiers] a call from a customer, a customer identifier associated with the customer being derived from signals in the call [received calls];

[a plurality of directory assistance service providers;

a first database of customer identifiers, a customer identifier in said database being associated with a language identifier;

a second database of destination telephone numbers;]

a [first] server for [searching said first database for] determining a language identifier associated with [a specified] the customer identifier, the language identifier representing a language;

[a second server for searching said second database for a destination telephone number desired by a customer;] and

a router for routing [a] the call [received at the switch] to a directory assistance [service] provider that provides directory assistance in the language represented by the language identifier [associated with the customer identifier identified from the received all].

72. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 71, wherein [a] the customer identifier comprises a [customer] telephone number.

73. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 72, wherein the signals contain an [customer telephone number comprises a customer's] ANI corresponding to the telephone number.

74. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 71, wherein the directory assistance [customer identifiers in the first database] comprises [telephone numbers] eliciting a request for information from the customer.

75. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 71, wherein the [first database and second database comprise the same database] directory assistance provider comprises an operator.

77. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 71, wherein the

customer is associated with a telephone service provider, and wherein the language identifier [associated with each customer identifier] is obtained from the telephone service provider.

78. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 71, wherein [each] the customer identifier [in the first database] is further associated with a priority code.

80. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 79, wherein [a] the call [from a customer having a customer identifier associated with a first priority code] is [inserted into] placed in a [the] call queue ahead of a call from [a] another customer having a customer identifier associated with a second priority code.

81. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim 78[, further comprising a first call queue and a second call queue], wherein [a] the call [from a customer having a customer identifier associated with a first priority code] is [inserted into] placed in a selected one of the [first] call [queue] queues.

82. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim [78] 71, further comprising a voice server providing a greeting personalized to [a] the customer [having a] based on the customer identifier [associated with a priority code].

83. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim [78] 71, further comprising a voice server providing a closing personalized to [a] the customer [having a] based on the customer identifier [associated with a priority code].

84. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim [78] 71, further comprising a voice server providing a menu of directory assistance options personalized

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to [a] the customer [having a] based on the customer identifier [associated with a priority code].

85. (Amended) The [directory assistance] system of claim [78] 71, wherein the [priority code associated with a] customer identifier [identifies] is associated with a [default] set of directory assistance options.